



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL | POSITION 8

COUNCILMEMBER TERESA MOSQUEDA

Today marks 1 year since George Floyd was killed by Derek Chauvin.

We should not live in a world where there are anniversaries of people killed by police. These anniversaries should not exist.

Since Floyd's death, according to the [Washington Post Fatal Force Database](#) close to 1,374 people have died at the hands of police across the country. For every single person murdered there are entire families torn apart. The effects of police violence do not stop with the death of a single person—each person killed is a member of a community, of a family, of a city. These deaths ripple out far beyond the name we see.

In the year following the murder of George Floyd, millions of people have continued to flood the streets, City Halls, state capitols, universities and in all institutions of power to demand an end to police violence. Far too often, people have been met with continued violence by the very institution they have been protesting. We've seen hundreds of images of everyday people being gassed and flash banded around the country. In the backdrop of this mass movement is the compounding crises of COVID-19, an economic recession, and the climate crisis. We cannot in good conscience continue with business as usual, because that is a part of what has brought us to the crises we currently face.

Locally, we have taken some important first steps towards heeding the call for more equitable and balanced investments, along with policy changes, to recognize we don't need armed officers in many situations where case managers and mental health counselors are needed. The curtain has now been pulled back. We know we cannot go back to relying on policing as a means of meeting public health and community safety needs, and simultaneously we must build-up and invest in community capacity to respond as alternative approaches with trusted community members.

How do we stop anniversaries like today from existing? The answer is two fold—on the front end we need to be resourcing Black communities to thrive through housing, childcare, good living wage jobs, quality healthcare, community centers, access to healthy food, well maintained streets and sidewalks. Simultaneously, we must continue to move away from the heavy investments in systems that have harmed Black communities and other communities of color.

Health and safety are basic human rights. As an elected official it is my job to ensure that every single resident of our city is able to be healthy and thrive. Black community members have long been deprived of the basic rights that every single person is entitled to. Things that we take for granted everyday like being able to be home with your family, to be with your loved ones, to hold your kids close at the end of the day, to be able to walk freely down the street, drive to the gas station, to sleep in your own home. To not have to have "the talk." True community safety is being able to do these things freely.

Even as of recent, our police department has overturned independent decisions by the Office of Police Accountability, embroiled in leadership deleting public record text messages, and spent beyond the

authorized budget. We must hold ourselves and the department as an institution accountable to make the changes necessary to eliminate anniversaries like today.

I stand with the people across the globe who are committed to continuing this work, we stand on the shoulders of decades of organizing for racial justice. To the families that have been harmed by police violence, please know that I see you and I will continue to fight for a just world.

Change is possible in our lifetime.

Solidarity,

Teresa Mosqueda